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ABSTRACT

Four essays are presented on the subject of bilingualism, with the specific purpose of providing information for teachers about the ways in which they can help language minority children sustain their first language while acquiring English. After an introduction by G. Richard Tucker, the following papers are presented: (1) "Bilingualism: Its Nature and Significance," by Wallace E. Lambert; (2) "Bilingual Education and First Language Acquisition," by Catherine E. Snow and Beverly A. Goldfield; (3) "Learning English as a Second Language in a Bilingual Setting: A Guide for Parents and Teachers," by Anna Uhl Chamot; and (4) "Cognitive Styles and the Bilingual Educator," by Stephen R. Cahir. (AMH)

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PAPERS IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS

Bilingual Education Series: 10

Faces and Facets of Bilingualism by Wallace E. Lambert, Catherine E. Snow & Beverly A. Goldfield, Anna Uhl Chamot, Stephen R. Cahir

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Introduction

In the opening essay of this volume, Wallace Lambert presents us with some diverse social and psychological correlates of bilingualism. He asks us to consider bilingualism as an important world phenomenon that takes different forms and has different correlates and consequences in various places.

Two observations are particularly important as we attempt to understand bilingualism and to take a closer look at the implementation and efficacy of bilingual education as an educational alternative for children in the United States. First, when bilingualism is defined broadly, there are many more people in the world who are bilingual than are monolingual and there are many more individuals whose schooling is in a second language than those who are educated in their mother tongue. Furthermore, in large areas of the world, bilingualism is a way of life, a social and linguistic circumstance to be accepted, drawn on, nurtured, and cherished; it is not a problem, a difficulty, a deficit to be overcome.

It is within this spirit that we present this volume of essays prepared by a distinguished group of researcher-scholar-teachers on behalf of the Center for Applied Linguistics in collaboration with the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education. These papers are intended to examine bilingualism and to provide explicit information for teachers about the ways in which they can help language minority children nurture and sustain their first language while acquiring a language of wider communication--English. The time must soon come in the United States when we cease to regard bilingual education as a form of compensatory education and instead look on it as a form of enrichment education.

G. Richard Tucker
Center for Applied Linguistics

Bilingualism: Its Nature & Significance

Wallace E. Lambert
McGill University

One of the wonders of the social world is the capacity humans have for creating a variety of languages. Even more wonderful, in my thinking, are the potential linkups we have between and among languages because of people who are bilingual.

Suppose for a moment that we had no modern communication systems and that an important message had to be circulated throughout the world by person-to-person communication. Let's suppose that the message is a socially significant one--for instance, "eating acorns protects one from cancer"--and suppose that the discovery took place in the toe of Italy and the news is to be relayed up to the Swiss, Yugoslav, and French borders and from there out around the world. Although the message would certainly have a bumpy transmission through numerous dialect communities in Italy itself (Hall, 1980) and through various language groups in multilingual Yugoslavia, it would ultimately penetrate all language barriers.

The most important elements in the relay, of course, would be bidialectic or bilingual people, and they would be found in high concentrations at the borders of each linguistic community. They would have developed their bidialectic or bilingual skills through communication experiences in the region of overlap of the two codes, or they might be migrants from one region to another, meaning that they brought their old-community code along with them. In either case, chances are that they would be less versed in the written form of the other language than in the spoken form.

Of course some bonafide residents of each community could also be bilingual if they had the interest and inquisitiveness (like that of an anthropologist) to get to know another community's language, literature, and culture. This more educated subgroup would likely be better versed in the written than the spoken form of the other language. As we shall see, the ways people become bilingual make important differences.

At certain relay points, only a few people would be bilingual enough to translate the message, whereas at other points many bilinguals would be available. An English version of the message might pass without need of translation among large numbers of educated Danes or Swedes, whereas a Danish or Swedish version would stop abruptly at the ports of England or France before a Danish-to-English or Swedish-to-French bilingual could be found. Thus, certain languages at certain times in history end up high on a hierarchy of language status or usefulness while others have little usefulness outside a restricted community. Where one's language falls in this hierarchy influences one's attitude toward learning another language; those with a high-status language wonder why they need to know any other language, whereas those with a low-status language realize they must.

My aim here is to describe what it is to be one of these critical message relayers and, more generally, what the social significance of being bilingual is. First of all, bilinguals are people who, because of ancestry, interest, or sheer place of residence, have social and emotional connections with some "other" place and some "other" group The demarcation between "own" group and "other" group is emphasized more by monolinguals than bilinguals, for it is the monolingual person who is especially likely to wonder and ask questions about bilingualism, questions such as: Can one really depend upon the allegiances of those who are partly connected elsewhere? The monolingual, who is shut out of the communication flow in a bilingual's other language, often becomes suspicious (sometimes even paranoid) about what might be being communicated in the unknown code.

It is just a short step, then, to where the monolingual would become concerned about social policies that might encourage either societal or individual forms of bilingualism. For a society, the argument goes, the more bilinguals there are, the less integrated and cohesive (and thus the less productive) the society must be; for individuals, the more bilingual they become, the less integrated their personalities must be. Of course, the argument continues, there will always be a need for bilinguals to translate and relay messages from one ethnolinguistic group to another and that chore can be done best by those who are in transition--still bilingual but on the road to real integration in the new group. In any case, translating and message relaying might best be considered as mechanical, relatively low-status operations. There is no sense in encouraging or aggrandizing bilingualism at any level. It is quite a different matter, however, when the better educated within one's own ethnolinguistic group learn other languages and learn about other people's ways of life. Their bilinguality and their allegiances are not questioned so long as they can prove that they have deep, unshakable roots in the home society.

Only recently has this traditional view of bilingualism been challenged, and the challenge has come mainly from new research findings in the behavioral sciences. Consequently, we now have a clearer picture of what bilingualism is and how it works. Rather than being a person divided between two linguistic and cultural groups, belonging to neither one fully, the bilingual can be said to have the potential of belonging comfortably to both ethnolinguistic groups and to be a well-integrated person as a consequence. At the society level there is a growing appreciation for the presence of bilinguals who, in the minds of some people in both developed and developing nations, are beginning to be seen as a precious national resource.

To arrive at this new perspective, researchers began by checking on some widespread beliefs--for example, the belief that being bilingual results in some type of mental confusion or retardation. Carefully conducted surveys of the performance on intelligence and school achievement tests found that bilinguals, instead of being handicapped, were actually scoring higher than matched monolinguals on IQ tests and moving along as swiftly if not more swiftly in school (see Lambert, 1978, and Cummings, 1979, for reviews of the pertinent research studies).

Then researchers began to ask questions about the mind of the bilingual. Does it function as well as the monolingual's mind? We now have several reasons to argue that it may be something more and something better than the monolingual mind. For one thing, the fully

bilingual person manages to work effectively with two linguistic systems and to keep the two functionally separated (see Lambert, 1969). For example, the bilingual can listen to a long list of words read word by word, half presented in one language and half in the other in a mixed order, and remember not only as many as a monolingual can when the whole list comes in one language, but also almost never make translation errors in recall, i.e., saying grapefruit when pamplemousse was the word actually presented. Furthermore, the two systems provide the bilingual with a cross-language and cross-cultural comparative perspective that the monolingual rarely experiences, e.g., a realization of the important differences that exist in shades of meaning across languages, not only in the meanings of words but also in the meanings of gestures, sounds, and pitches.

This sensitivity to meaning that comes with bilingualism deepens one's understanding of concepts. It becomes clear that concepts have distinctive meanings in the context of each linguistic system, and this realization broadens one's perspective on language and reality. Through experience, bilinguals realize that words are only arbitrarily attached to referents (e.g., the things we sit on are called chaises in one system, Stuhls in another). This awareness protects bilinguals from the traps of "reification" i.e., believing that because there is a name for something, that something necessarily exists, or that names and referents are naturally linked and inseparable. As a consequence, bilinguals are better able to think beyond the bounds of linguistic systems and to play and create with words and concepts. It is as though bilingualism provides persons with a mental stereoscope, enabling them to see concepts in perspective, and this is perhaps what Wilder Penfield meant when on several occasions he argued that "the bilingual brain is a better brain."

A word of caution is called for, though, because not all bilinguals are able to maintain functional equivalence in their two languages, nor are all able to reap the advantages of bilinguality. Many are held up in their progress toward full bilingualism because of personal and motivational reasons (see Gardner and Lambert, 1972), and many, because of society's insensitivities, are forced to abandon their bilinguality (see Lambert, 1978).

As for the healthiness of the bilingual's personality, the few research findings so far available reveal no signs of disturbance or maladjustment that can be attributed to bilingualism. For example, young people who become functionally bilingual through immersion programs benefit by increased self-esteem and confidence because of the experience (see Lambert and Tucker, 1972), and those who were permitted to become bilingual and bicultural through early family experiences develop a deep appreciation for their parents and the roles parents play, at the same time as they benefit from the cultural diversity represented by their parents (see Aellen and Lambert, 1969).

Recent research by sociolinguists has also forced a re-examination of the effects of linguistic and cultural pluralism on the economic and social development of societies. Stanley Lieberson and colleagues, for example, in their cross-national comparisons of mother-tongue diversity and national development find no substance to the belief that mother-tongue diversity hampers the economic or social development of nations (Lieberson and Hanson, 1974). This new research has direct implications for developed nations like the United States and Canada which receive

large numbers of immigrants. There are signs that these nations are experimenting with changes in their social and educational policies so as to protect the languages and cultures of newcomers. Thus, there may be the beginnings of an appreciation for languages and cultures as precious societal resources. There are of course serious and cogent counter arguments to such changes, and much more research is called for before we can expect fundamental modifications in national policies on societal pluralism (see, for example, Rabushka and Shepsle, 1972).

It turns out then that many of the bilingual person's problems of adjusting and coping are determined primarily by the attitudes and reactions of amorphous collectivities of people in society. On a person-to-person basis, things usually go more smoothly. But society is harsh and often merciless because people in collectivities pick up on the slightest sign of ethnicity--including the way a person uses language--and read all sorts of things into it, often things that aren't really there, except in the minds of the "reader." Take the accents bilinguals often have in their speech. Accents reveal in an instant the whole experience of expatriation and migration that is sometimes a joyous affair but often a spirit-wrenching one. For many listeners, accents conjure up stereotypes about "foreigner" or "stranger in our midst," with all the attendant suspicions about bilingual/bicultural people with divided allegiances and the like. Society thus makes up its collective mind about people on the basis of small things like accents and language styles.

Of course the status hierarchy of languages works itself into these judgments, and thus bilinguals with humble backgrounds are singled out and hurt most. Research is now exploring this social judgment-making process. For instance, tape recordings are made of a series of speakers, each reading a standard passage. In the series some speakers are bilingual or bidialectic so that they give two renditions, one with and one without an accent or a foreign language. These readings are presented to listeners who are asked to judge the personality makeup of each speaker. The listeners are kept ignorant of the fact that the same speakers appear at different places in the series.

What is astonishing in such studies is the fact that so many listeners, from all walks of life, attribute biased, stereotyped traits to a speaker according to the language or accent guise the speaker momentarily adopts. Thus, the accent or the other language evokes in large proportions of listeners an image of a less dependable, less socially attractive, less likely to succeed person than is the case when the same person drops his accent and "speaks white" (see Lambert, 1967; Giles and Powesland, 1975).

There is, of course, no truth to these attributions, but true or not, they are so crystalized and wide-spread in so many societies that they constitute a formidable barrier to interpersonal communication and understanding. Knowledge about this process paves the way for correctives, and these are now being tried out. For example, innovative approaches to learning about other languages and cultures are being introduced to children in school settings, and these seem to have a corrective effect (see Lambert and Tucker, 1972).

These studies of reactions to speech style indicate that society puts great pressure on ethnolinguistic minority groups to shed the traces of old cultures, languages included, and to embrace the new. This pressure usually means that members of a less prestigious ethno-

linguistic community are expected to accommodate to some vague but powerful norm about the expected and acceptable language of communication. They are induced to put aside their native or home language and even the accented traces associated with it. They are expected, in other words, to venture on a route toward bilingualism that essentially subtracts the home language by shifting the focus to the new, usually more prestigious, language of the host culture. We refer to this form of bilingualism, where the language of the new country comes to substitute for the original home language as "subtractive" bilingualism, implying that in the long run the bilingualism is more apparent than real since one language is progressively put aside or subtracted.

Some now believe that this experience leaves ethnolinguistic minority group members--adults as well as children--in a psychological limbo and that it contributes to the often noted incapacity they have with both native and new-nation languages and the difficulties they have in achieving in school or in occupations (see Lambert, 1978). By way of contrast, "additive" bilingualism characterizes those who are at home and well rooted in their own language and culture but who delve seriously into the mastery of a second or foreign language. Additive bilingualism provides opportunities for mainstreamers to "add" one or more languages to their repertories and to enjoy a number of personal advantages--in self-confidence, openness of mind, intellectual enrichment--as a consequence of becoming bilingual (Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Genesee and Lambert, 1980).

The challenge for social planners and educators in this decade, then, is to help transform instances of subtractive bilingualism into additive ones. Some research on how such transformations take place are available (see Lambert, 1978; Lambert, Giles, and Picard, 1975), but much more has to be done. These transformations involve radical changes in collective thinking. Instead of being pressured to accommodate and to put their home languages behind them, the ethnolinguistic minority group is given an opportunity to develop fully the home language by being schooled in the early years through that language so that it can be written and read as well as spoken and understood. The "rooting" of the home language in this fashion is coordinated with an independent program of study conducted through the national language, enabling the "minority" group young person to be at home in both languages and cultures.

As I see it, our best chance to meet this challenge is to recognize that there are two faces to bilingualism, a subtractive and an additive face, and to provide opportunities for majority group members--the mainstreamers in society--to embark on effective programs of language learning and bilingualism. Mainstreamers are the ones who stand to profit so much from the addition of a new language. Society stands to profit even more because as soon as mainstreamers make the gesture to develop real skill in other languages, they thereby demonstrate an appreciation for minority groups and minority languages. This appreciation then would be the impetus minority group members need to master and be proud of the home languages and cultures they are so often pressured to bypass and ignore.

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Bilingual Education & First Language Acquisition

Catherine E. Snow & Beverly A. Goldfield
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HOW CAN ELEMENTARY TEACHERS BENEFIT FROM KNOWING ABOUT FIRST LANGUAGE ACQUISITION?

Knowing something about the way children have learned language during their first few years will help the classroom teacher to understand two things about their students: how best to facilitate further language growth in the classroom and why some children seem less able than others to deal with the language demands made in the classroom.

Elementary teachers use language for all the tasks they face each day in their classrooms--explaining, teaching, praising, disciplining, regulating, joking, and chatting with their students--and they generally assume that their students use and understand language as they themselves do. When something goes wrong in the completion of one of those daily tasks, teachers often fail to consider that it may be a language problem, not recalcitrance or a learning disability, that is causing the breakdown.

As adults, we are used to the idea that language has many different functions, and that it must be used differently in different settings. Children who arrive for the first day of school, however, may have experienced language in only a small number of settings and may literally not know how to talk in unfamiliar situations, even though their language is well developed and quite adequate in the familiar settings. For many children, school is their first encounter with language used to convey new and complex information, to display knowledge, to play language games, or to talk about language itself. In addition, some children may be facing the task of learning to do all these things in a new language--English.

Furthermore, children's own language skills are noticed and evaluated not just in terms of how effectively they communicate needs and ideas but as language. Classroom performance may be rated on the basis of how well a child understands verbal directions, asks and answers questions, and responds in classroom discussions. Some children may fail at these tasks, not because of low ability or poor language skills, but because the tasks are unfamiliar to them. They do not have the experience of using language as the classroom demands. The barriers to successful communication in the classroom are quite obvious for children learning English as a second language, since they must acquire a totally new set of language skills. It is important to remember, though, that even the children from English-speaking homes must learn new uses and styles of language, if they are to function effectively in the classroom.

WHAT DO CHILDREN WHO ARE STARTING SCHOOL KNOW ABOUT LANGUAGE?

Most children entering school can understand almost all of what adults say to them (in their first language) and can use language for a wide variety of communicative purposes. They can demand (*Give me a cookie*), request politely (*Won't you please give me a cookie?*), report (*Jennie wasn't at school today*), inquire (*Is this a dinosaur or an alligator?*), deny (*My name isn't sweetiepie!*), promise (*If you come to my house, I'll show you my bicycle*), and threaten (*If you don't give me back my bicycle, I'll tell my mommy!*). These communicative functions are called speech acts--the act that one is trying to accomplish with one's speech. Research has shown that all children, whether from language-rich or language-poor backgrounds, are similar in their development of speech acts. All normally developing five-year-olds can produce a wide variety of speech acts--i.e., they can use language for a wide variety of communicative purposes.

The same speech act may be expressed in different grammatical forms. The speech act "request" can be expressed with a declarative sentence (*I want a cookie*), an imperative (*Give me a cookie, please*), or an interrogative (*May I have a cookie? Could you give me a cookie?*). By the time they are three or four years old, most children are skilled at using sophisticated, indirect speech acts (e.g., *I sure am hungry* or *Those cookies look good*) rather than direct speech acts (*Gimme a cookie*) to accomplish their purposes. Their use of indirect speech acts reveals a well-developed ability to calculate the effect of their utterances on the listener. In addition, of course, it means that they have mastered the complex grammatical rules governing the correct form of statements, questions, imperatives, and negatives. The complexity of those rules is revealed by the kinds of mistakes made in the process of learning them, both by three- and four-year-olds, who say things like "Why you are going to work?" "Where mummy's office is?" and "It don't can go", and by older second-language learners who say things like "How works this?" "Where goed you?" and "I no can go. No is late enough."

Perhaps the most significant feature of language is that it is a system which can be used to create an infinite variety of meanings, using a limited set of words and sentence patterns. In order to learn the language system, children must sort out regularities and patterns in the speech they hear. The mistakes children make suggest they are using a system of rules in their early language. The toddler who uses the word ball to refer to an orange or a tire is telling us that the most important feature of ball for him is "roundness." The child who says "goed", "eated", "seed", and "weared" is telling us that she has learned the English rule for forming past tenses; if she did not know the rule, she would never be able to produce these forms she had never heard.

Many of the mistakes made by children learning English as a second language are identical to these errors of first-language learners--the so-called "developmental errors." For second-language learners, as for first-language learners, these mistakes reveal that they are doing a good job of identifying regularities and forming rules about English, and that they are taking an active role in the language learning process. Second-language learners may also at times produce an English expression based on the native language. A native Spanish-language speaker, for example, may say "he has three years" instead of "he is three years old," giving a literal translation of the Spanish expression. This kind of confusion is called an "interference error," because

it reveals interference from the first language. Both interference and developmental errors occur because children's thought processes are more advanced than their language--they are trying to say things for which their knowledge of the language is not yet adequate. The fact that children make such errors means that they are striving to discover the correct way to talk about all the complex things about which they are thinking.

WHAT ASPECTS OF LANGUAGE DO CHILDREN ENTERING SCHOOL STILL NEED TO ACQUIRE?

There are four areas in which elementary school children's language will still show considerable development: vocabulary, some complex syntactic constructions, metalinguistic awareness, and certain social uses of language. Vocabulary is the area of development most familiar to elementary teachers. A large part of the science and social science curriculum in the elementary years consists of giving children new words to use in thinking about the world. In addition, some old words which children much younger than six are already using will come to acquire a more complex meaning for them. Many four- and five-year-olds use come, bring, and keep partially incorrectly (Come it to me instead of Bring it to me; Bring it there instead of *Take it there*; You can keep these home instead of *You can take these home)*, suggesting that, though they have a good idea of the meaning of such words, their definitions are not yet completely developed.

The grammatical constructions that first-graders have not yet fully mastered include the passive (*The horse was kicked by the cow* might be interpreted as *The horse kicks the cow*) and sentences with the verb ask, which is interpreted as if it meant tell (*Ask Cookie monster what he likes to eat. You like cookies, Cookie Monster*). Such constructions are relatively rare in speech to preschoolers, so it is not surprising that it will take them a few extra years to learn how to understand and produce them.

Metalinguistic ability refers to the ability to think and talk about language. This ability is quite separate from, and develops much later than, the ability to use language for communication. Preschool children do not yet separate language from what language means, so they cannot recognize that words are arbitrary symbols. The preschooler firmly believes that a rose by any other name would not only smell different but be different! For example, if asked for a long word, most preschoolers will say something like "hose" or "snake," whereas a short word is "little finger." Clearly, the inability to recognize that the length of a word depends on how it sounds, not on what it means, can be a great hindrance in learning how to read. The child who expects the written word chair to look like a chair might be able to learn to read pictographs but will have trouble with an alphabetic writing system. Futhermore, preschoolers, when asked for a word, will usually give either a whole sentence or a phrase like "the big black dog." They might well agree that most nouns and verbs are words but deny such status to articles (a, the), prepositions (in, on), or auxiliary verbs (is, had). There is some suggestion, though, that metalinguistic awareness is an aspect of language development in which the bilingual child excels over the monolingual child. The child who has learned that perro and dog both mean the same thing, who has discovered that Spanish sentences cannot be literally translated into English and still make sense, who finds

that many adults cannot understand what he or she is saying in one language but can understand it in another, has had considerable opportunity to reflect on and learn about the arbitrary nature of the relationship between sound and meaning.

The appropriate way to talk in various social situations is something many schoolchildren, even some adults, have not yet learned. How many of us feel fully confident that we know what to say at a funeral? At a retirement reception? At a job interview? Such skills are, of course, largely social skills, but they are also intrinsically linguistic. Having the right thing to say in such situations--knowing the language to use--is the key to correct social behavior. Knowing how to express condolences, tell a joke, or introduce oneself to strangers at a party means having learned what to say and when to say it. That learning depends on having experienced such situations, having had the opportunity to observe how others act in them. The teenager at his first party or the adult at her first funeral is faced with exactly the problem of the six-year-old on the first day of school: they all know perfectly well how to talk, but none know precisely what to say in this situation.

WHAT ARE THE OPTIMAL CONDITIONS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING?

Children learning to talk must discover the rules and regularities in the language they are learning, and they must map the speech they hear onto what they see going on around them. Children have a lot of help from caregivers with these tasks. The speech addressed to children tends to be slower, simpler, better enunciated, and more repetitive than speech addressed to adults; thus, children have less trouble figuring out what actually was said than older language learners would have. But just being exposed to clear speech is of course, not enough to help anyone learn language. Imagine trying to learn a language by listening to it on the radio; no matter how slowly and carefully the announcer spoke, there would be little chance to learn anything useful from this speech because there would be no chance to figure out what he or she meant. The crucial feature of caregivers' language to children is that it is so closely tied to what the children are experiencing--what is going on around them, what they are seeing, and what they themselves are trying to say. The one-year-old turns to look out the window, and his mother says, "Airplane?" He drops his cup, and his father says, "All gone!" He raises his arms to be lifted into his highchair, and mother says, "Up you go." The child's own actions and focus of attention determine to a large extent what is said to him, and he thus has the chance to relate those simple, clear, repetitive adult utterances to what he is experiencing. The utterances are made interpretable.

Or consider the 18-month-old who says, "Mummy go." Her father answers "Yes, Mummy's gone to work. She'll be back after your nap this afternoon." The child's very simple utterance is expanded and put into correct, complete grammatical form. Thus children who are just starting to talk about past events get the chance to hear the past tense, even before they can produce it themselves. The children's utterances are extended--new information is given that is relevant to the topic introduced by the child. Evidence suggests that the best kind of parental speech during this early period of language acquisition stays pretty close to the topics introduced by the children. The greater richness and complexity of the parental utterances are more useful if those

utterances are related to topics the children have introduced. Ir addition to input about language, parents who talk to their children in this way are providing large amounts of information about the world and how it works.

By the time children are ready for school, their language is sufficiently developed for them to understand and learn from more complex speech about topics introduced by others and about events that cannot be directly experienced. Children themselves often initiate such complex and abstract discussions--"Why the sun is hot?" "Why Mommy doesn't have a beard?" "Why germs make you sick?". Children of this age are ready to learn about language through language--learning new vocabulary items by hearing definitions of words, playing games like "rhyming words," opposites, etc. However, bilingual children's proficiency in the second language may not be developed enough for the abstract discussions that these children are able to conduct in their first language. Nonetheless, the basic principle of language acquisition continues to hold--children learn the most from input that is responsive to their interests and focus of attention. The classroom is the first situation for many children in which they must attend to and act upon language that is not directed specifically to them. This may be why classroom routines--establishing predictable, recurrent activities--seem to work so well in the primary grades. Such routines may be especially important to bilingual children. The vocabulary and structure of a new language are acquired more easily when classroom activities are organized around daily routines that become a familiar context for language learning. Knowing what is going to happen next can simplify the task of organizing their own activities so that second-language learners can attend to and learn from the language the teacher is using.

DO ALL CHILDREN LEARN LANGUAGE THE SAME WAY?

Normally developing children progress through a similar sequence of stages in learning their first language. The single-word stage of pointing and naming is followed by meaningful combinations of two or more words. Later developments, such as the ability to form questions and express negation, also follow a predictable pattern in the language of most children.

However, there are also differences in language learners, which may reflect differences in the language children hear or differences in the strategies adopted by any particular child for solving communicative problems. For example, names of objects may dominate the early vocabulary of some children, who seem to spend several months wandering around the house labeling things just for the fun of it. Other children learn only a few labels but large numbers of social and expressive words--such as "bye-bye," "thank you," "mama," "want," and "naughty" during the earliest stage of language acquisition. Some children learn new words or forms by imitating them from adult speech, while other children rarely imitate. Some children try out new words or expressions as soon as they have heard them, whereas others prefer to figure out exactly what a word means or how a rule works before they will use it themselves.

Other differences in styles of language learning reflect differences in how language is used in the home or community of the child. Different cultures vary enormously in their expectations concerning language behavior. For example, among many Native American groups, children are expected to be silent in the presence of adults, whereas middle-class

white Americans generally encourage children to be talkative. These principles of language use that govern when to talk, how to address adults, and the like are brought to school by children who may be very surprised to discover that their teachers' expectations differ from their parents'. Although such behaviors and principles differ for different ethnic or social class groups, they are part of the language system and are learned just as the words and the structure of the language are learned. An understanding of how these cultural differences in language use operate can assist the teacher in supporting a child's successful transition from talk at home to talk at school.

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Learning English as a Second Language in a Bilingual Setting: A Guide for Parents & Teachers

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A large number of children in the United States, from many different language backgrounds, are currently learning English as a second language. Some of their families have been living in the United States for several generations in areas where languages such as Spanish, French, or Chinese are spoken; some children's families have arrived recently from countries where languages such as Vietnamese or Arabic are spoken; the majority of these limited English speaking children have been born in the United States and are American citizens. Whatever their background, children who need to learn English as a second language share many similar experiences.

Many parents and teachers believe that it is important for children to maintain their first language even as they learn English as a second language. Others feel that children should concentrate only on English. Adults concerned with children learning English as a second language often have questions about the process that children go through in acquiring a second language and about ways to facilitate this process. Current research in second language acquisition has provided partial answers to some of the questions asked by parents and teachers. A discussion of these answers to frequently asked questions follows.

HOW DOES A CHILD LEARN A SECOND LANGUAGE?

A child learning a second language goes through a process that has fundamental similarities to that of a child learning a first language (Krashen, 1978; Cook, Long, and McDonough, 1979). A baby listens to language for many months before trying to use words for communication, and when young children begin to speak, they do not use complete sentences or perfect grammar. They omit many words or parts of words, and they make errors in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar (Brown, 1973).

When children learn a second language, they also start with just a few words and make many errors. Both first-and second-language learners have to listen to the language they hear around them and try to understand it; they are acquiring language as they are listening. Speech will emerge, sometimes after a silent period of several months (Krashen, 1981), as the language learners select the words and expressions that seem to be most important and use them to convey their own ideas to others. As they hear more of the new language, they begin to realize how it works and what its rules are, and they gradually make their own language output match the models they hear. Children's language learning fluctuates (Chamot, 1978). No one should expect or demand either immediate speech or error-free speech from early language learners.

Children learning a second language already have a good communication system in their first language, or in the case of many bilingual families, in a mixture of two languages. Children may try to use parts of their first communication system in the second language. Sometimes this borrowing helps the child, and sometimes it leads to errors in the second language (Saville-Troike, 1978). Whether errors in the new language are made because children are simplifying the language, making incorrect assumptions about how it works, or transferring portions of their first language inappropriately, these error-producing processes and strategies are part of the normal second language learning process.

WHICH CHARACTERISTICS ARE FOUND IN SUCCESSFUL SECOND-LANGUAGE LEARNERS?

Although many people think that children find it easy to learn a second language, this is not necessarily true. Children, like older learners, experience difficulties in learning a new language, and some are more successful than others (Hatch, 1978). Children's attitudes and motivation are crucial to all learning, including second-language learning (Gardner and Lambert, 1972). Children who really want to learn the new language and who have sufficient exposure to it will probably be successful learners. For instance, a child learning English as a second language who has English speaking friends outside of school will probably feel more motivated to learn English than will the child who has no contact with English outside of school.

Children must be open and receptive to the new language in order to acquire it. Children who reject the new language and dislike the people who speak it maintain a psychological barrier that makes it difficult for the new language to enter their consciousness (Schumann, 1978; Krashen, 1978). This does not mean that children should abandon their first language or the people who speak it for a second language, and even a second culture can be added to the important foundation of the first language and culture without harming it. As children gain increasing skill in their first language, they tend to transfer their successful communication skills to their second language. If their first language is not sufficiently developed, positive transfer to the second language may be limited, and children may become "semilingual" in both languages (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1979).

Happy, interested, self-confident children who receive parental and teacher support and understanding make the best second-language learners. They need to be linguistic risk-takers who are willing to make guesses about how the new language works and try them out (Gonzales, 1981). Successful second-language learners can tolerate their own limited comprehension and expression skills without becoming frustrated. They are able to choose the most important features of the language to pay attention to, rather than feeling overwhelmed by all the words, sounds, and structures of the new language that they have not yet learned. Of course, successful second-language learners also must be willing to expend effort and active involvement in the process of acquisition (Omaggio, 1978).

WHAT KINDS OF PROBLEMS DO CHILDREN HAVE IN LEARNING A SECOND LANGUAGE?

Children are likely to become impatient and frustrated. Learning another language takes time, and not being able to communicate successfully with other children and teachers can be upsetting. A child may become quiet and withdrawn and may seem to be unwilling to learn the new

language. Or the child may become aggressive and fight with other children when verbal communication breaks down (Chamot, 1972). A child may learn just enough of the new language to engage in basic communication and may seem indifferent to making further progress. A child may become antagonistic toward the people who speak the second language and may ridicule them and their culture (Hatch, 1978).

All these reactions in a child's beginning contact with a second language and culture are normal, and all can be helped through sympathetic understanding and the provision of opportunities for successful communication in the second language. On the positive side, many children see the new language as a challenge, and they are enthusiastic and determined to be successful in acquiring it. They find learning a second language interesting and feel a great sense of satisfaction as they learn more and more of it.

WHERE DO CHILDREN LEARN SECOND LANGUAGE BEST?

Some children learn another language only at school and have little opportunity to use it outside the classroom. Others acquire the second language mainly through interacting with people in the community who speak it. This "real world" language learning contributes far more to children's ability to communicate in the second language than does the language learning that occurs only in the classroom (Krashen, 1978). However, classroom language development is also important because it teaches the kind of language that is needed for success in English school subjects. This classroom language differs in many ways from the language used in social situations (McLaughlin, 1981).

The amount of time children are in contact with the second language each day affects the rate of learning. For example, a child living and studying in an environment where a great deal of English is spoken will use the new language sooner and better than will the child who hears English for only a few hours a day in school.

IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE WAY BOYS AND GIRLS LEARN A SECOND LANGUAGE?

Some research studies (Stern, 1976) have found no significant differences between boys and girls in second-language learning, whereas others have found that girls score higher on second-language achievement tests (Burstall, 1975) or that boys learn more quickly than girls (Saville-Troike, 1978). Many individual differences exist, and motivation is an important factor (Lambert, 1981). If children feel that it is important to learn the second language well, they will take advantage of all available resources to reach this goal. But if second-language learners do not feel the need for more than basic communication and little social pressure to improve second-language skills, then their second language acquisition will probably not progress far beyond this limited goal (Nida, 1971).

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE A CHILD TO LEARN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE?

This depends on the child's personality, attitude, age, and amount of exposure to English. An elementary school child who wants to learn English and who has many hours of daily contact with English both in and out of school will usually be able to manage basic communication with English speakers after about two years. It will probably take a minimum of five to seven years for a child to be able to do school work success-

fully in the new language (Cummins, 1981); teachers and parents should remember that an English-speaking child has five or six years of first language learning and experience before even attempting to do school work in it.

Children older than ten initially may make more rapid progress in learning a second language than younger children, but the younger ones usually catch up and may eventually surpass the older second-language learners (Krashen, Long, and Scarcella, 1979). However, there are many cases of older children, teen-agers, and even adults who do learn to use a second language extremely well, though they often retain some degree of accent from their first language. It is generally the case that a child learner of a second language will be more likely to achieve native-like competence in that language than will the adolescent or adult learner. For this reason, the age of a child upon arrival in the United States is a factor in that child's acquisition of English, but high levels of proficiency are possible no matter what age second-language acquisition begins.

MOST CHILDREN LEARNING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE AT SCHOOL SPEAK ANOTHER LANGUAGE AT HOME. WON'T THEY BECOME CONFUSED BY HEARING TWO DIFFERENT LANGUAGES EVERY DAY? SHOULD CHILDREN GIVE UP THEIR FIRST LANGUAGE WHEN THEY ARE LEARNING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE?

The answer to both question is no. Everyone needs to maintain the personal and cultural ties that are expressed in one's first language. Learning English as a second language can be compared to learning a useful skill such as reading or multiplication. It is not necessary to give up one's first language and culture to learn English well. It is possible to be bilingual, that is, to use two languages easily, and even bicultural, that is, to feel comfortable in two cultures.

The experience of hearing and using two different languages every day is a common one for many children, not only in the United States but also throughout the world. A number of studies have been made of these bilingual children that indicate that while children may experience some initial confusion when acquiring two language systems at once, this disappears as soon as children mature and become more proficient in their languages (Leopold, 1978; Burling, 1978; McLaughlin, 1981). Bilingual children also will switch from one language to the other, even in the middle of a sentence, and this, too, is a normal habit for bilinguals of any age when conversing with other bilinguals (Saville-Troike, 1976). Recent studies show that bilingual students not only have linguistic advantages over their monolingual counterparts, but they are also superior cognitively (Lambert, 1981).

In speaking one language at home and the other language at school, children will probably have no difficulty in keeping the two apart, because the topics talked about at home tend to be different from the ones discussed at school (Saville-Troike, 1976). Most children find it easier to keep two languages separate when each is used for certain situations and people exclusively. In fact, most bilinguals prefer one language over the other in certain situations. For instance, the first language may be preferred for family life, whereas the second language may be useful mainly in school and job situations. Teachers and parents can explain to children that while it is important to know English to use at school and with English speakers, it is equally important to know the first language to use at home and with other speakers of it.

WON'T CHILDREN LEARNING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN THE UNITED STATES JUST PICK IT UP? OR SHOULD THEY HAVE SPECIAL ENGLISH INSTRUCTION AT SCHOOL?

Children will probably pick up enough English from other children for their social needs, but if they are to work successfully in English in school subjects, English as a second language (ESL) instruction can be very helpful. This special instruction can provide extra practice in some of the features of English that are particularly difficult, and it can introduce the new language gradually and review it consistently so that children feel successful as they learn.

One approach to teaching ESL is to make language a part of the instruction in the other school subjects. ESL teachers can help children individually with their special needs and can interpret a child's progress to other teachers who are not specialists in second-language learning and teaching. Regardless of the approach, a crucial ingredient for the acquisition of a second language is that the language heard by and used with the children be comprehensible to these children. The type of language input should be slightly beyond the children's proficiency in the language at that point, facilitating the acquisition of more and more complex language. Once children understand the meaning of what they hear in the new language, speech will emerge when they feel ready to talk (Krashen, 1981).

Of course, many children have learned and still learn a second language through being exposed to it in their daily life and with no special instruction. However, this type of natural language acquisition may build communication skills primarily for social situations, which may not be sufficient for successful study of school subjects in the second language. Recent research indicates that there are different dimensions to language proficiency. One dimension has to do with the type of language proficiency required for social interaction, whereas another is related to an individual's general cognitive and academic language proficiency (Cummins, 1980). This latter type of language proficiency perhaps can be developed most easily in a school setting; when sufficiently developed in the first language, this cognitive academic language proficiency transfers successfully to the second language.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP A CHILD LEARN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE?

First of all, provide many opportunities for the child to experience the new language in as many different settings as possible. The child needs to be able to understand at least part of what is being listened to, even though complete comprehension develops gradually. Second-language learners at the beginning stages probably need to hear the same kind of speech that is used by parents when they talk to very young children learning their first language. Observe a mother talking to her two-year-old. She uses short, simple sentences and gestures, and she responds with understanding and interest even though the child's language is far from proficient. Communication takes place between mother and child because they talk about things that are happening at the moment and about things that are meaningful and important to them. Probably this same type of interaction in a second language provides language experiences that aid communication of meaning (McLaughlin, 1980). Second-language learners seem to learn best when the emphasis is on understanding and communicating an idea, rather than on correct grammatical forms (Krashen, 1978).

Children often learn second languages from other children who are native speakers of that language. Research has found that children who make social contacts with children who are native speakers of the new language and join in play groups with them become successful second-language learners (Wong Fillmore, 1976). One reason may be that when children are playing together, they use simple language, they talk about what interests them and about what is happening at the moment, and they care more about communication than about correct form.

Teachers can capitalize on the linguistic abilities of English-speaking children by using them as peer tutors for limited English-speaking children in both formal classroom situations and in games and play activities (Gonzales, 1981). In addition, children learning English can benefit from participation in community activities such as Scouting or church groups where they can be in contact with English-speaking peers.

Children can also be encouraged to practice English with adults in the community. For example, a child can buy something in a store, pay for movie tickets, or make a telephone call. Each contact in the second-language will increase the child's ability to communicate in it (Chamot, 1979). Movies and television programs that are designed for children and have plenty of action and uncomplicated stories are good second-language experiences for children. Games such as Scrabble and crossword puzzles can help develop a child's English vocabulary and spelling, and any game that requires the use of English will help a child's ability to use the language.

WHAT CAN I SAY TO HELP A CHILD LEARN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE?

What you say reflects how you feel about the second language and the culture it represents. Your positive attitude toward the new language and culture will increase a child's motivation to learn it. Try not to make critical remarks about the second language or the people who speak it; the child might interpret such a criticism to mean that you do not feel it is worthwhile to learn the language.

Explain to the child that knowing another language means being able to get acquainted with interesting people who speak that language. When the child feels anxious about not understanding everything in English right away, provide reassurance by explaining that it is impossible to understand everything at the beginning and that everyone has moments of anxiety when learning a new language (Schumann, 1978).

Praise the child for using English spontaneously. Show your interest in the child's second-language acquisition by talking about what is being learned. If you are just beginning to learn English yourself, let the child teach you. In fact, if you try to learn a second language (whether it is English or the child's first language), you will not only set a good example for the child but also understand much better both the process and the problems experienced by the child.

However, parents should use the language they feel most comfortable with in speaking with their children on a daily basis, while encouraging them to use the other language in appropriate situations. Parental attitudes play an important part in children's learning of a second language (Stern, 1967). Teachers need to be aware that the attitudes of other children can also affect a child's second-language learning. Peer pressure to avoid using the new language or to refrain from using it correctly can have a negative effect on a child's proficiency (Gardner,

1968; Stevick, 1976). Both parents and teachers need to remember that it takes many years to learn a language well, whether it is a first or second language. They should not express impatience with a child's progress in acquiring English.

WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN CHILDREN MAKE ERRORS IN THE NEW LANGUAGE?

Constant correction of errors makes many chidren feel that they are not succeeding in learning the new language, and so they withdraw from active participation in the learning process. Explain to children that everyone makes mistakes when learning a language, whether it is a first, second, or third language. Most mistakes are corrected by children on their own as they hear correct models and try to match them, but this happens gradually. Be understanding and supportive of children as they learn English.

As a parent, remember that most mistakes made by young children learning their first language go uncorrected by adults, and that this same acceptance of a child's intended meaning rather than constant correction can help build the self-confidence and communicative skills of second-language learners as well (Saville-Troike, 1976). As a teacher, explain the language-learning process to the English-speaking children in the class and encourage them to be sensitive to the problems faced by their limited-English-speaking classmates. The purpose of language is meaningful communication. If limited-English-proficient children are involved in saying something meaningful to their more proficient peers, they should not be interrupted for correction of errors, because this can inhibit their language development.

SHOULD PARENTS BE ENCOURAGED TO ENROLL THEIR CHILDREN IN BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS OR IN ESL PROGRAMS?

If parents are fortunate enough to live in a school district offering bilingual education in English and their home language, they should consider seriously the many advantages that this type of education offers. In bilingual programs, children receive instruction in both ESL and their first language, so that they can make progress in subject matter in the language they know best while they are learning English.

Bilingual programs fall into two principal categories: maintenance programs and transition programs. In the first type, children are taught basic concepts and initial reading, writing, and math skills in their first or stronger language. At the same time, they have intensive work in English so that eventually they will be able to use either or both languages for any school subject. The first language is maintained throughout the child's school years by having many subjects taught in it. The second type of bilingual program is one in which children begin their schooling in their stronger or first language but make the transition to all English instruction in the middle grades. They may retain conversational fluency and some reading and writing ability in the other language, particularly if it is spoken at home, but languages, like musical instruments or sports, need to be practiced regularly if they are to be truly maintained.

Some schools offer only ESL instruction because not enough non-English-speaking children of the same first-language background are enrolled to make bilingual instruction practicable. Children in this situation cannot make much progress in their school subjects until they have learned enough English to undertake their academic activities in

English, and therefore they usually fall behind in their school work and grade level. Although some children are able to catch up eventually, many never do, and most children find that switching languages abruptly is not only difficult but also emotionally upsetting (Charot, 1972).

In properly implemented bilingual education programs, on the other hand, children can feel the satisfaction of progressing in their school subjects in their first language while they are learning English. They find that what they have learned in one language can be transferred easily to the second language, and they have more opportunities for being successful in their school work. Research indicates that a high level of development in a first language leads to increased achievement in a second language (Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa, 1976; Cummins, 1980).

The long term effects of either ESL only or bilingual education (which includes ESL) have yet to be conclusively researched, because both successes and failures have been recorded for each approach. The variables of individual, situational, and linguistic factors interact and influence each child and school setting in many different ways.

School districts exist to serve the educational needs of the local community, and when one of these needs is bilingual education, parents should take an active role in asking that it be provided for their children. Parents have an important voice in their community, and their children's educational needs should be brought to the attention of the school district. When bilingual education is needed and wanted, parents should express this need to school principals, members of the school board, the school superintendent, and others working for the school in their community.

TERMS USED IN ESL AND BILINGUAL EDUCATION

Bilingualism — This refers to the ability to use two languages for communication. A balanced bilingual is a person who can use both languages equally well. Most bilinguals prefer one language or the other in certain situations.

Code Switching — This term describes what occurs when a bilingual changes from one language to the other during a conversation with other bilinguals. A bilingual is thus often able to choose the best language for a certain topic or situation.

English Abbreviations — The following acronyms refer to the teaching of English as a new language.

EFL - English as a Foreign Language, or English taught as a school subject only, usually in a non-English-speaking country.

ESL - English as a Second Language, or English taught in an English speaking country to non-English speakers who need to study or work in English.

ESOL - English for Speakers of Other Languages, or special English instruction for non-English speakers.

ESEA Title VII	The seventh major section of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, often called the Bilingual Education Act, passed in 1968, is a law that enables bilingual education to be offered to non-English-speaking children when there are enough children of the same language background attending the same school.
Language Dominance	This means the language that a person knows best and is most comfortable with. In the case of bilinguals, language dominance can often be discovered through special tests. It is not unusual to have one language dominant for certain situations and the other language dominant for others.
Proficiency	This is used to describe a person's level of ability in a language. The following acronyms are often used in school programs to describe the English level of non-native speaking students. LEP - Limited English Proficiency LES - Limited English Speaker LESA - Limited English-Speaking Ability NEP - No English Proficiency NES - Non-English Speaker
Second Language Reading	Reading in a second language is usually taught after a child has learned to read in the first language for two reasons: reading is easier in the dominant language because the child already understands nearly all the words and sentences to be read at the beginning level, and reading skills and confidence acquired in first language reading can be useful in learning to read in the second language.
Second Language Writing	Writing in a second language is an extremely difficult task that can be made easier when the child has already learned to express written ideas in the first language. Children learning English as a second language need to master reading and writing skills so that they can be used in every subject area.

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Cognitive Styles & the Bilingual Educator

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"Cognitive styles" have been a topic of psychological inquiry for quite some time, but only in recent years has the term surfaced in education. This interest stems in part from the need to understand why some children, particularly language minority children, do not benefit equally from instruction in today's classrooms. Clearly, one source of this disparity is language--children who do not adequately speak or understand English will undoubtedly have problems in English-only situations. In addition to this language difference, some researchers have investigated other possible reasons for low academic achievement among specific ethnic, cultural, or linguistic minorities. Cognitive styles have been proposed as one such reason.

WHAT ARE COGNITIVE STYLES?

Although psychologists offer a variety of definitions for cognitive style, all employ the term to refer to aspects of individual differences in processing information. For example, one cognitive style dimension frequently discussed is field-independence/field-dependence, most simply illustrated by the cliche about "the forest and the trees." The field-independent person can be described as one more aware of or sensitive to the individual trees that make up the forest than to the forest as a whole. Alternatively, the field-dependent person attends more to the forest. Note that the information perceived is essentially the same: the forest is a group of trees, and many trees together constitute a forest. The stress of this field-independent/field-dependent cognitive style, as with all cognitive style dimensions, is placed on how the individual processes the information and not what is processed. A second cognitive style dimension involves the verbal/visual modes. Some individuals prefer and respond more readily to verbal presentation of information, while others gravitate toward visual presentation of the same information. Through whichever means, however, all have access to the same content.

CONSEQUENCES IN THE BILINGUAL CLASSROOM

These were basic ideas behind the cognitive style concept when it was first introduced. More recently, some researchers have extended cognitive style discussions to include group characteristics. This resulted from comparing scores on various test measures of cognitive styles collected for ethnic and linguistic groups. In the case of field-independence/field-dependence, for instance, scores indicated Mexican Americans and Blacks to be more field-dependent than their Anglo American counterparts. (It must be stated here, however, that questions have been raised about the validity of these findings, particularly in light

of the fact that language differences may affect test performance on cognitive style measures.) Extending the notion of cognitive style into classrooms with bilingual students, some researchers have asserted that school and school tasks are geared toward field-independent, verbally oriented students. In these circumstances, then, students from ethnic or linguistic minorities characterized as field-dependent or visually oriented are incompatible with the mainstream cognitive style preferences. As with language differences, alternative cognitive styles are thus seen as impediments to successful educational participation for certain bilingual students.

WHAT COGNITIVE STYLES ARE NOT

With that brief overview of cognitive styles and their relationship to bilingual education, it is necessary to dispel any confusion about the relationship between cognitive style and cognitive ability or general intelligence. There is absolutely no reservation here: a difference in the style or mode of functioning has no effect whatsoever on the capacity for functioning. Different cognitive styles are simply that--they are different, not better or worse. This point is emphasized since the dangers of stereotyping an individual or group are obvious, particularly if one cognitive style is perceived to be inherently better than the other. Equally important is to realize that labels like *field-independent* and *field-dependent* are not intended to indicate two categories of people. Individuals or groups are described using these labels in "more or less" terms and not as "either-or" categories.

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURE, LANGUAGE, AND COGNITIVE STYLE?

Explanations for the existence of some cognitive styles are frequently linked to descriptions of varying child rearing practices. It is a widely accepted fact that all parents do not raise their children in the same way. Children are "taught"--both formally and through example--the expectations and values of their parents. Cultural experience plays an important role in forming these expectations and values; common language and action communicate them across generations.

Researchers have examined a variation in cognitive style that many teachers have noticed for a long time. As mentioned earlier, children from certain cultural groups--among them some Native Americans, for example--seem to be more responsive to information presented visually rather than verbally. This may be related in part to a cultural preference for learning in the home through observation and listening. Conversely, the process of learning in most schools emphasizes active participation and speaking. This contrast between home learning and school learning is apparent and has educational consequences.

The cultural differences in the preferred cognitive styles of home and school are heightened by differences between home and school languages. School life can be characterized in two steps: teacher's verbal presentations of information and students' verbal indications of having learned that information. If the culture and cognitive style of school place different values on language use from those of home, imagine the compounded difficulties of the student trying to learn a second language as well.

WHAT DO DIFFERENT COGNITIVE STYLES LOOK LIKE IN THE CLASSROOM?

Before considering a few examples of different cognitive styles in

bilingual classrooms, one distinction must be drawn. Up to this point, cognitive styles have been discussed in terms of test measurements of preferences. Relating personality and social traits to cognitive styles must be done with caution. For example, a person whose psychological test performance labels him or her as field-dependent may well actually behave in many cases as more field independent than the test might indicate. Therefore, to link behavior characteristics to a certain style is at best a broad generalization open to many exceptions.

Student behaviors associated with field-dependence include a greater ability to learn social facts and remember people's faces. Field-dependent students may be influenced by social reinforcement and criticism more than field-independent students. In contrast, students in this latter group may perform better on analytic tasks and appear to be more task oriented in test situations than field-dependent ones, who spend more time looking at the examiner and are more attentive to the social aspects of testing.

Teachers may also manifest their positions on the field-independent field-dependent scale through contrasting teaching methods. Field-dependent teachers, for instance, might prefer discussions to lectures or group responsibility for learning as opposed to taking more responsibility for the teaching themselves. Additionally, field-dependent teaching might emphasize the social aspects of the curriculum rather than the strictly academic content. Finally, teachers and students who share similar cognitive styles regard each other more favorably. As stated previously, these generalizations are only valid as any generalization about group behavior can be.

THE MESSAGE FOR TEACHERS

(1) "Cognitive style" refers to the way in which a student tends to process information, not his or her ability to do so.

(2) No cognitive style preference is better or worse than any other, just as no language is better or worse than another. It is more a question of appropriateness--what the particular situation calls for or requires.

(3) Cognitive styles refer to a psychological concept that resulted from analyses of individuals by their performance in testing situations. The actual behaviors that are related to a specific cognitive style are assumed to be related to that cognitive style assessment.

(4) Because cognitive styles are individual tendencies not necessarily applicable to categories of students, stereotypic classifications of students or their behavior should be avoided.

(5) Specific cognitive styles may be correlated with particular cultural groups or specific child rearing practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS

Since there is evidence that some children may be more responsive to visual presentation and others to verbal, the most effective and all-inclusive educational approach would make use of both. In bilingual classrooms with students of varying English language ability, a combination of visual and verbal approaches is particularly appropriate.

The amount and quality of a student's classroom participation are extremely important indicators of a child's learning. For the bilingual student, participation takes on added importance as actual practice with language. Thus, educational approaches that stimulate verbal partici-

pation are desirable. Students who tend to prefer the social aspects of curriculum are more likely to respond verbally to learning situations that encourage personal contact and interaction among classroom members. This increases language practice, language learning, and learning in general.

Changes initiated to increase student participation must focus on classroom practices and on the staff responsible for executing those practices. Children are not silent because they do not want to cooperate and learn. Something else is happening. Teachers should try alternative ways for students to demonstrate what they have learned--for example, offer an alternative to questioning a "silent" student in front of his or her peers in order to lessen the competitive atmosphere of the classroom.

Because cognitive styles appear to be related in part to cultural differences in socialization, every effort should be made to discuss with parents and community members their views on child rearing and the education of children. Beyond discussion, these people must be involved as much as possible in classroom activities and on the school staff. The more teachers can become actively involved with the outside-of-school experiences of their students, the more effectively they can teach.

Finally, teachers should take some time to think about the following aspects of their teaching: How do you indicate acceptance of your students? Do you use both words and actions to do so? How do you indicate your feelings, preferences, personal opinions in your role as a teacher and as an adult? How do you encourage cooperation, helpfulness, consideration, and respect among all your students? How do you communicate with your students about their families and their community? How do you demonstrate understanding of the individual student's preferences and style? How do you provide a model for your students' different academic and social needs? These are clearly aspects of all teaching; the best information available indicates that these questions highlight areas of teaching that may be directly related to cognitive styles. The answer to each could begin with: "It depends on the circumstances and on the child ...."

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